

KING ARTHUR AND MEDIEVAL KNIGHTS

1. Uwagi ogólne

Zestaw materiałów opatrzony wspólnym tytułem *King Arthur and Medieval Knights* jest adresowany do studentów uzupełniających studiów magisterskich na kierunkach humanistycznych. Przedstawione ćwiczenia mogą być wykorzystane do pracy z grupami studentów filologii, kulturoznawstwa, historii i innych kierunków humanistycznych jako materiał przedstawiający kulturę Wielkiej Brytanii.

2. Poziom zaawansowania: B2+/C1

3. Czas trwania opisanych ćwiczeń

Ćwiczenia zaprezentowane w tym artykule są przeznaczone na trzy lub cztery jednostki lekcyjne po 90 minut każda. Czas trwania został ustalony na podstawie doświadczenia wynikającego z pracy nad poniższymi ćwiczeniami w grupach na poziomie B2+.

4. Cele dydaktyczne

W swoim założeniu zajęcia mają rozwijać podstawowe umiejętności językowe, takie jak czytanie, mówienie, słuchanie oraz pisanie. Przy układaniu poszczególnych ćwiczeń miałam również na uwadze poszerzanie zasobu słownictwa, dlatego przy tekstach zostały umieszczone krótkie słowniczki, ćwiczenia na odnajdywanie słów w tekście oraz związki wyrazowe. Kolejnym celem jest cel poznawczy, czyli poszerzenie wiedzy studentów na temat postaci króla Artura, jego legendy oraz średniowiecznego rycerstwa.

5. Uwagi i sugestie

Materiały *King Arthur and Medieval Knights* obejmują pięć tekstów tematycznych z ćwiczeniami oraz dwie audycje z ćwiczeniami na rozwijanie umiejętności słuchania. Przewidziane są tu zadania na interakcję student–nauczyciel, student–student oraz na pracę indywidualną. Ćwiczenia w zależności od poziomu grupy, stopnia

zaangażowania studentów w zajęcia i kierunku mogą być odpowiednio zmodyfikowane. Teksty tu zamieszczone możemy czytać i omawiać na zajęciach (zwłaszcza z grupami mniej zaawansowanymi językowo, tak by studenci się nie zniechęcili stopniem trudności) lub część przedstawionych ćwiczeń zadać jako pracę domową, jeżeli nie chcemy poświęcać zbyt dużo czasu na zajęciach. Decyzja należy do nauczyciela. W zależności od tego, jaka opcja zostanie wybrana, materiału starczy na odpowiednio więcej lub mniej jednostek lekcyjnych.

Lekcję rozpoczynamy od krótkiego testu sprawdzającego wiedzę o królu Arturze. Ćwiczenie może być przeprowadzone na zasadzie zawodów między drużynami, które w określonym przez nauczyciela czasie (2–3 minuty) odpowiadają na pytania z ćwiczenia 1. Nauczyciel, dla podniesienia motywacji, może ustalić nagrodę dla zwycięzców, np. plus z aktywności. Po przeprowadzeniu zawodów przechodzimy do pracy w grupach trzyosobowych (ćwiczenie 2). Każda z osób czyta fragment tekstu (A, B lub C) o legendzie króla Artura, w którym zawarte są ciekawe historyczne fakty na temat tej postaci, a następnie własnymi słowami streszcza przeczytane informacje.

Drugi zaprezentowany w artykule tekst poświęcono literaturze średniowiecznej, a zwłaszcza utworom, w których występuje postać legendarnego króla. Dołączyłam do niego dwa ćwiczenia na czytanie ze zrozumieniem: jedno na wstawianie zdań wyjętych z tekstu, drugie typu „odpowiedz na pytania”. Ta część lekcji może być pominięta z grupami niefilologicznymi.

Ciekawym przerwaniem lekcji jest pierwsza część programu dokumentalnego o królu Arturze, do której przygotowane zostały cztery ćwiczenia. Trwa ona co prawda prawie 10 minut, ale zalecałabym oglądnięcie jej trzy razy (zwłaszcza z grupami B2) ze względu na dużą liczbę zadań do wykonania.

Po obejrzeniu programu studenci czytają fragment *Mitologii* Tomasza Bulfincha o królu Arturze i średniowiecznym rycerstwie, z którego dowiadują się, jak wyglądał proces przygotowania młodzieńca do stanu rycerskiego. Do tekstu dołączone są trzy ćwiczenia: jedno na zrozumienie i dwa na słownictwo.

Następnie przechodzimy do ćwiczenia rozwijającego umiejętność pisania, w którym studenci mogą puścić wodze fantazji. Zostało ono oparte na jednej z legend arturiańskich spisanej przez Beatrice Clay w książce *Stories from Le Morte D'Arthur and the Mabinogion*. Z tekstu usunęłam kilka paragrafów, zostawiając część słówek i zwrotów, które oryginalnie w nich występowały. Studenci mają za zadanie odtworzyć brakujące fragmenty tekstu. Sugerowałabym, żeby to ćwiczenie przeprowadzić w grupach, gdyż w ten sposób staje się ono dużo ciekawsze i wzbudza większą kreatywność. Jeżeli nauczyciel uzna za stosowne, można je też przeprowadzić na zasadzie zawodów między poszczególnymi grupami. Wygrywa ta z grup, której paragrafy są najbardziej zbliżone do oryginału znajdującego się w kluczu. Stopień bliskości z oryginalnym tekstem oceniają sami studenci przez głosowanie. Oczywiście nie mogą oni głosować na swoją pracę. Po rozstrzygnięciu zawodów nauczyciel może przyznać nagrodę zwycięskiej grupie, tak jak w ćwiczeniu 1.

Ostatnim etapem jest obejrzenie trzeciej części programu dokumentalnego o królu Arturze i wykonanie ćwiczeń przygotowanych. Tak jak przy pierwszej jego części zalecałabym trzykrotne jej oglądnięcie.

KING ARTHUR AND MEDIEVAL KNIGHTS

1. Do the quiz to test your knowledge about king Arthur and his times.
 1. Who was Geoffrey of Monmouth?
 2. When and where is Arthur's name mentioned for the first time?
 3. What is the connection between king Arthur and the Saxons?
 4. What do you know about the Battle of Camlann?
 5. Who added Sir Lancelot and the Holy Grail to the story about king Arthur?
 6. What do you know about *Historia Brittonum*?
 7. What is the origin of king Arthur's name?
 8. What is the connection between king Arthur and Ursa Major?
2. Work in groups of three and read some information about king Arthur to find out if your answers are correct. Follow the instruction.

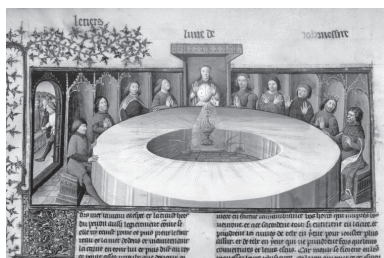
STUDENT A

Read the text and retell it to fellow students in your own words. You must mention all the information which has been underlined.

King Arthur

King Arthur is a legendary British leader of the late 5th and early 6th centuries, who, according to medieval histories and romances, led the defence of Britain against Saxon invaders in the early 6th century. The details of Arthur's story are mainly composed of folklore and literary invention, and his historical existence is debated and disputed by modern historians. The sparse historical background of Arthur is gleaned from various sources, including *The Annales Cambriae*, *The Historia Brittonum*, and the writings of Gildas.

The legendary Arthur developed as a figure of international interest largely through the popularity of Geoffrey of Monmouth's fanciful and imaginative 12th-century *Historia Regum Britanniae* (*History of the Kings of Britain*). Some Welsh and Breton tales and poems relating the story of Arthur date from earlier than this work; in these works, Arthur appears either as a great warrior defending Britain from human and supernatural enemies or as a magical figure of folklore, sometimes associated with the Welsh Otherworld, Annwn. How much of Geoffrey's *Historia* (completed in 1138) was adapted from such earlier sources, rather than invented by Geoffrey himself, is unknown.



The Round Table experience a vision of the Holy Grail. From a 15th-century French manuscript

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Arthur, access: 17 November, 2012.

Although the themes, events and characters of the Arthurian legend varied widely from text to text, and there is no one canonical version, Geoffrey's version of events often served as the starting point for later stories. Geoffrey depicted Arthur as a king of Britain who defeated the Saxons and established an empire over Britain, Ireland, Iceland, Norway and Gaul. Many elements and incidents that are now an integral part of the Arthurian story appear in Geoffrey's *Historia*, including Arthur's father Uther Pendragon, the wizard Merlin, Arthur's wife Guinevere, the sword Excalibur, Arthur's conception at Tintagel, his final battle against Mordred at Camlann and final rest in Avalon. The 12th-century French writer Chrétien de Troyes, who added Lancelot and the Holy Grail to the story, began the genre of Arthurian romance that became a significant strand of medieval literature. In these French stories, the narrative focus often shifts from King Arthur himself to other characters, such as various Knights of the Round Table. Arthurian literature thrived during the Middle Ages but waned in the centuries that followed until it experienced a major resurgence in the 19th century. In the 21st century, the legend lives on, not only in literature but also in adaptations for theatre, film, television, comics and other media.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Arthur, access: 22 November, 2012.

sparse – few and far between, scanty, scarce

warrior – a person engaged in, experienced in, or devoted to war

depict – to show

strand – a constituent element in a complex whole

resurgence – a renewal

STUDENT B

Read the text and retell it to fellow students in your own words. You must mention all the information which has been underlined.

Debated historicity

The first datable mention of King Arthur is in a 9th-century Latin text. *The Historia Brittonum*, a 9th-century Latin historical compilation attributed in some late manuscripts to a Welsh cleric called Nennius, lists twelve battles that Arthur fought. These culminate in the Battle of Mons Badonicus, or Mount Badon, where he is said to have single-handedly killed 960 men. Recent studies, however, question the reliability of the *Historia Brittonum*. (...)

The other text that seems to support the case for Arthur's historical existence is the 10th-century *Annales Cambriae*, which also link Arthur with the Battle of Mount Badon. The *Annales* date this battle to 516-518, and also mention the Battle of Camlann, in which Arthur and Medraut (Mordred) were both killed, dated to 537-539. These details have often been used to bolster confidence in the *Historia*'s account and to confirm that Arthur really did fight at Mount Badon. Problems have been identified, however, with using this source to support the *Historia Brittonum*'s account. (...).

This lack of convincing early evidence is the reason why many recent historians exclude Arthur from their accounts of sub-Roman Britain. In the view of historian Thomas Charles-Edwards, "at this stage of the enquiry, one can only say that there may well have been an historical Arthur [but] (...) the historian can as yet say nothing of value about him". These modern admissions of ignorance are a relatively recent trend; earlier generations of historians were less sceptical. Historian John Morris made the putative reign of Arthur the organising principle of his history of sub-Roman Britain and Ireland, *The Age of Arthur* (1973). Even so, he found little to say about a historical Arthur.

Partly in reaction to such theories, another school of thought emerged which argued that Arthur had no historical existence at all. Morris's *Age of Arthur* prompted archaeologist Nowell Myres to observe that "no figure on the borderline of history and mythology has wasted more of the historian's time". Gildas' 6th-century polemic *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* (On the Ruin and Conquest of Britain), written within living memory of Mount Badon, mentions the battle but does not mention Arthur. Arthur is not mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle or named in any surviving manuscript



Arthur as one of the Nine Worthies, tapestry, c. 1385

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Arthur, access: 17 November, 2012.

written between 400 and 820. He is absent from Bede's early-8th-century Ecclesiastical History of the English People, another major early source for post-Roman history that mentions Mount Badon. (...)

Some scholars argue that Arthur was originally a fictional hero of folklore — or even a half-forgotten Celtic deity — who became credited with real deeds in the distant past. They cite parallels with figures such as the Kentish totemic horse-gods Hengest and Horsa, who later became historicised. Bede ascribed to these legendary figures a historical role in the 5th-century Anglo-Saxon conquest of eastern Britain. It is not even certain that Arthur was considered a king in the early texts. Neither the *Historia* nor the *Annales* calls him “rex”: the former calls him instead “dux bellorum” (leader of battles) and “miles” (soldier).

Historical documents for the post-Roman period are scarce, so a definitive answer to the question of Arthur's historical existence is unlikely. Sites and places have been identified as “Arthurian” since the 12th century, but archaeology can confidently reveal names only through inscriptions found in secure contexts. The so-called “Arthur stone,” discovered in 1998 among the ruins at Tintagel Castle in Cornwall in securely dated 6th-century contexts, created a brief stir but proved irrelevant. Other inscriptional evidence for Arthur, including the Glastonbury cross, is tainted with the suggestion of forgery. Although several historical figures have been proposed as the basis for Arthur, no convincing evidence for these identifications has emerged.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Arthur, access: 22 November, 2012.

putative (reign) – commonly regarded as being; domniemany

living memory – żywa pamięć

inscribe – to write, print, carve, or engrave (words or letters) on or in a surface

deity ['deɪtɪ] – god or goddess

prompt – to inspire

conquest – the act or process of conquering (gaining control)

STUDENT C

Read the text and retell it to fellow students in your own words. You must mention all the information which has been underlined.

The name

The origin of the name Arthur remains a matter of debate. Some suggest it is derived from the Roman nomen gentile (family name) Artōrius, of obscure and contested etymology (but possibly of Messapic or Etruscan origin). Some scholars have suggested it is relevant to this debate that the legendary King Arthur's name only appears as Arthur, or Arturus, in early Latin Arthurian texts, never as Artōrius (though it should be noted that Classical Latin Artōrius became Arturius in some Vulgar Latin dialects). However, this may not say anything about the origin of the name Arthur, as Artōrius would regularly become Art(h)ur when borrowed into Welsh.

Another possibility is that it is derived from a Brittonic patronym *Arto-rīg-ios (the root of which, *arto-rīg- “bear-king” is to be found in the Old Irish personal name Art-ri) via a Latinized form Artōrius. Less likely is the commonly proposed derivation from Welsh arth “bear” + (g)wr “man” (earlier *Arto-uiros in Brittonic); there are phonological difficulties with this theory — notably that a Brittonic compound name *Arto-uiros should produce Old Welsh *Artgur and Middle/Modern Welsh *Arthwr and not Arthur (in Welsh poetry the name is always spelled Arthur and is exclusively rhymed with words ending in -ur — never words ending in -wr — which confirms that the second element cannot be [g]wr “man”).

An alternative theory, which has gained only limited acceptance among professional scholars, derives the name Arthur from Arcturus, the brightest star in the constellation Boötes, near Ursa Major or the Great Bear. Classical Latin Arcturus would also have become Art(h)ur when borrowed into Welsh, and its brightness and position in the sky led people to regard it as the “guardian of the bear” (which is the meaning of the name in Ancient Greek) and the “leader” of the other stars in Boötes.

A similar first name is Old Irish Artúr, which is believed to be derived directly from an early Old Welsh or Cumbric Artur. The earliest historically attested bearer of the name is a son or grandson of Áedán mac Gabráin (d. AD 609).

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Arthur, access: 22 November, 2012.



Merlin the wizard, c. 1300

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Arthur, access: 17 November, 2012.

patronym – a family name derived from the name of your father or a paternal ancestor
 root – the element that carries the main component of meaning in a word and provides the basis from which a word is derived by adding affixes or inflectional endings or by phonetic change; rdzeń
 derivation – the process by which words are formed from existing words or bases by adding affixes, as singer from sing or undo from do, by changing the shape of the word or base, as song from sing, or by adding an affix and changing the pronunciation of the word or base, as electricity from electric



Mordred, Arthur's final foe according to Geoffrey of Monmouth, illustrated by H.J. Ford for Andrew Lang's *King Arthur: The Tales of the Round Table*, 1902

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Arthur, access: 17 November, 2012.

3. Read the text below about Medieval literary traditions and insert the missing sentences.

- a. This takes the form of a dialogue between Arthur and the gatekeeper of a fortress he wishes to enter, in which Arthur recounts the names and deeds of himself and his men, notably Ceï (Kay) and Bedwyr (Bedivere).
- b. According to the *Life of Saint Gildas*, written in the early 12th century by Caradoc of Llancarfan, Arthur is said to have killed Gildas' brother Hueil and to have rescued his wife Gwenhwyfar from Glastonbury.
- c. One recent academic survey that does attempt this, by Thomas Green, identifies three key strands to the portrayal of Arthur in this earliest material.
- d. The later manuscripts of the Triads are partly derivative from Geoffrey of Monmouth and later continental traditions, but the earliest ones show no such influence and are usually agreed to refer to pre-existing Welsh traditions.
- e. In one stanza, the bravery of a warrior who slew 300 enemies is praised, but it is then noted that despite this "he was no Arthur," that is to say his feats cannot compare to the valour of Arthur.
- f. They include "Kadeir Teyrnnon" ("The Chair of the Prince"), which refers to "Arthur the Blessed," "Preiddeu Annwn" ("The Spoils of Annwn"), which recounts an expedition of Arthur to the Otherworld, and "Marwnat vthyr pen[dragon]" ("The Elegy of Uther Pen[dragon]"), which refers to Arthur's valour and is suggestive of a father-son relationship for Arthur and Uther that pre-dates Geoffrey of Monmouth.
- g. The second is that the pre-Galfridian Arthur was a figure of folklore (particularly topographic or onomastic folklore) and localised magical wonder-tales, the leader of a band of superhuman heroes who live in the wilds of the landscape.

The earliest literary references to Arthur come from Welsh and Breton sources. There have been few attempts to define the nature and character of Arthur in the pre-Galfridian tradition as a whole, rather than in a single text or text/story-type. 1) ____ The first is that he was a peerless warrior who functioned as the monster-hunting protector of Britain from all internal and external threats. Some of these are human threats, such as the Saxons he fights in *The Historia Brittonum*, but the majority are supernatural, including giant cat-monsters, destructive divine boars, dragons, dogheads, giants and witches. 2) ____ The third and final strand is that the early Welsh Arthur had a close connection with the Welsh Otherworld, Annwn. On the one hand, he launches assaults on Otherworldly fortresses in search of treasure and frees their prisoners. On the other, his warband in the earliest sources includes former pagan gods, and his wife and his possessions are clearly Otherworldly in origin.

One of the most famous Welsh poetic references to Arthur comes in the collection of heroic death-songs known as *Y Gododdin* (The Gododdin), attributed to the 6th-century poet Aneirin. 3) ____ *Y Gododdin* is known only from a 13th-century manuscript, so it is impossible to determine whether this passage is original or a later interpolation, but John Koch's view that the passage dates from a 7th-century or

earlier version is regarded as unproven; 9th- or 10th-century dates are often proposed for it. Several poems attributed to Taliesin, a poet said to have lived in the 6th century, also refer to Arthur, although these all probably date from between the 8th and 12th centuries. 4) _____

Other early Welsh Arthurian texts include a poem found in the Black Book of Carmarthen, "Pa gur yv y porthaur?" ("What man is the gatekeeper?"). 5) _____ The Welsh prose tale *Culhwch and Olwen* (c. 1100), included in the modern *Mabinogion* collection, has a much longer list of more than 200 of Arthur's men, though Cei and Bedwyr again take a central place. The story as a whole tells of Arthur helping his kinsman Culhwch win the hand of Olwen, daughter of Ysbaddaden Chief-Giant, by completing a series of apparently impossible tasks, including the hunt for the great semi-divine boar Twrch Trwyth. The 9th-century *Historia Brittonum* also refers to this tale, with the boar there named Troy(n)t. Finally, Arthur is mentioned numerous times in the Welsh Triads, a collection of short summaries of Welsh tradition and legend which are classified into groups of three linked characters or episodes in order to assist recall. 6) _____ Even in these, however, Arthur's court has started to embody legendary Britain as a whole, with "Arthur's Court" sometimes substituted for "The Island of Britain" in the formula "Three XXX of the Island of Britain". While it is not clear from the *Historia Brittonum* and the *Annales Cambriae* that Arthur was even considered a king, by the time *Culhwch and Olwen* and the Triads were written he had become Penteyrnedd yr Ynys hon, "Chief of the Lords of this Island", the overlord of Wales, Cornwall and the North.

In addition to these pre-Galfridian Welsh poems and tales, Arthur appears in some other early Latin texts besides *The Historia Brittonum* and *The Annales Cambriae*. In particular, Arthur features in a number of well-known vitae ("Lives") of post-Roman saints, none of which are now generally considered to be reliable historical sources (the earliest probably dates from the 11th century). 7) _____ In *The Life of Saint Cadoc*, written around 1100 or a little before by Llifris of Llancarfan, the saint gives protection to a man who killed three of Arthur's soldiers, and Arthur demands a herd of cattle as wergeld for his men. Cadoc delivers them as demanded, but when Arthur takes possession of the animals, they turn into bundles of ferns. Similar incidents are described in the medieval biographies of Carannog, Padarn and Eufflam, probably written around the 12th century. A less obviously legendary account of Arthur appears in the *Legenda Sancti Goeznovii*, which is often claimed to date from the early 11th century although the earliest manuscript of this text dates from the 15th century. Also important are the references to Arthur in William of Malmesbury's *De Gestis Regum Anglorum* and Herman's *De Miraculis Sanctae Mariae Laudensis*, which together provide the first certain evidence for a belief that Arthur was not actually dead and would at some point return, a theme that is often revisited in post-Galfridian folklore.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Arthur, access: 22 November, 2012.

onomastic – of or relating to proper names; nazewnicze

4. Read the text about Medieval literary traditions again and answer the questions.
 1. Where do the earliest literary references to Arthur come from?
 2. How is Arthur depicted in these references?
 3. What do we learn about the collection of heroic death-songs?
 4. What does the Welsh prose tale *Culhwch and Olwen* tell about?
 5. What is described in the *Life of Saint Cadoc*?

Watch the program *King Arthur, part 1* and do exercises 5-8.

King Arthur, part 1 (9:53 min.)

Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QLATxHGRqFg>, access: 22 November, 2012.

5. Answer the questions.

1. How is King Arthur described in the program?
2. What is said about the end of the 5th century?
3. What had the Britons enjoyed for centuries?
4. Who flooded into the country when the Romans had left?
5. Why did the people need a hero? Who was it?

6. Complete the gaps. One gap equals one word.

Like a Dark Age 1) _____ he swept 2) _____ the land.
His legend 3) _____ with each act of 4) _____. (...)
Arthur was a 5) _____ king, 6) _____ by his people
and 7) _____ by his enemies. He was aided by 8) _____
all-powerful 9) _____, the great 10) _____ Merlin
who 11) _____ him 12) _____ the land from the
13) _____ castle, Camelot. At his 14) _____ stood the
15) _____ wife, Guinevre.

7. Correct mistakes in the sentences below.

1. Around him were the best knights of the land, sir Gawain, the brain, sir Galahad, the pure and sir Lancelot, the handyman.
2. The Round Table only welded the knights together.
3. The search for the Holy Grail is referred to as the quest for glory.
4. The tale of king Arthur is one of many great legends of the time.
5. Fifty hundreds years later historians are trying to determine if the legendary king really existed.

8. Match the parts.

1. The problem with Arthur is to know where the history ends and the literature begins.
2. Many people believe that sifting for tiny clues we can piece together an idea who he might have been.
3. For the past 400 years Britain had been an occupied territory mighty Roman Empire.
4. After centuries of protection the Britons were told to fend for themselves.
5. Barbarian hoards long suppressed by the Roman presence took advantage of this turmoil and rose up like a plague. Some came by sea, others came by land.

6. For a while the mercenaries did as they were told. But Britain was a wealthy, lush nation and the Saxons decided that they wanted the fertile green land for themselves.
7. Before long Britain was involved in a full-scale war against the Anglo-Saxons.
8. Then incredibly, near the end of the 5th c, the invasion appears to be halted and even reversed.
9. Many believe that this mysterious savior was the basis for the legend of King Arthur.
10. There are three candidates whose biography seem to fit.
 - a. The really horrible thing about being a 5th century Briton is you are a: very rich comparatively speaking for the area and b: you are surrounded by greedy neighbours who want to be as rich as you.
 - b. All the early stuff we have on Arthur is in a way more literature than history.
 - c. The Britain's gamble backfired. The Saxons swept across the land.
 - d. Who was he? Where did he come from?
 - e. They enjoyed benefits package that included permanent roads, lucrative trade and security from the vicious raiding of tribes beyond the Empire's edge.
 - f. One by one the great Roman cities fell to the swords of the invaders.
 - g. Some people claim that a single man, his true identity shrouded in mystery, was responsible for this turning of the tide.
 - h. What's really interesting about the Arthur story is that many of the elements within it which seemed to be completely mythological may have had some kernel truth.



David I of Scotland knighting a squire
Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knight>,
access: 15 January, 2013.



The English fighting the French knights at the Battle of Crécy in 1346
Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knight>, access:
15 January, 2013.

- i. Candidate 1 was a brave and tragic man who stayed behind his adopted people, the Roman. Candidate 2 was a well-travelled man and a powerful leader capable of welding together the fractured nation, the high King. Candidate 3 ruled over the last British stronghold, the big bad Bear.
- j. The Britons brought some muscles, Germanic mercenaries, they invited the Angles and Saxons to defend them against the Picts and the Scots.

9. Read the fragment from *Bulfinch's Mythology* and mark the statements below as true (T) or false (F).

- 1. Numerous chiefs liked each other a lot and united when there was a need and in ordinary times.
- 2. Chivalry referred to young men of wealthy families having the privilege of bearing arms.
- 3. In time of peace a knight hardly ever looked for adventure, he mainly attended at his sovereign's court.
- 4. Knights-errant were gladly accepted in castles and abbeys as the source of new information and enjoyment.
- 5. When they were learning how to be a knight, the candidates performed such humiliating duties such as waiting at table and other menial ones.
- 6. When fourteen, the candidates found the training much more difficult because at this point it was connected with physical strength and fitness.
- 7. During the whole training, which was completed at the age of 21, they were not only taught how to fight and serve but also good manners.
- 8. When the training was complete, the knight chose the mistress of his heart.
- 9. The ceremony of initiation was quite serious and consisted of various stages, the last of which was the reception of a helmet, a shield and a spear.

King Arthur and his knights

On the decline of the Roman power, about five centuries after Christ, the countries of Northern Europe were left almost destitute of a national government. Numerous chiefs, more or less powerful, held local sway, as far as each could enforce his dominion, and occasionally those chiefs would unite for a common object; but, in ordinary times, they were much more likely to be found in hostility to one another. In such a state of things the rights of the humbler classes of society were at the mercy of every assailant; and it is plain that, without some check upon the lawless power of the chiefs, society must have relapsed into barbarism. Such checks were found, first, in the rivalry of the chiefs themselves, whose mutual jealousy made them restraints upon one another; secondly, in the influence of the Church, which, by every motive, pure or selfish, was pledged to interpose for the protection of the weak; and lastly, in the generosity and sense of right which, however crushed under the weight of passion and selfishness, dwell naturally in the heart of man. From this last source sprang Chivalry, which framed an ideal of

the heroic character, combining invincible strength and valor, justice, modesty, loyalty to superiors, courtesy to equals, compassion to weakness, and devotedness to the Church; an ideal which, if never met with in real life, was acknowledged by all as the highest model for emulation.

The word “Chivalry” is derived from the French “cheval,” a horse. The word “knight,” which originally meant boy or servant, was particularly applied to a young man after he was admitted to the privilege of bearing arms. This privilege was conferred on youths of family and fortune only, for the mass of the people were not furnished with arms. The knight then was a mounted warrior, a man of rank, or in the service and maintenance of some man of rank, generally possessing some independent means of support, but often relying mainly on the gratitude of those whom he served for the supply of his wants, and often, no doubt, resorting to the means which power confers on its possessor.

In time of war the knight was, with his followers, in the camp of his sovereign, or commanding in the field, or holding some castle for him. In time of peace he was often in attendance at his sovereign’s court, gracing with his presence the banquets and tournaments with which princes cheered their leisure. Or he was traversing the country in quest of adventure, professedly bent on redressing wrongs and enforcing rights, sometimes in fulfilment of some vow of religion or of love. These wandering knights were called knights-errant; they were welcome guests in the castles of the nobility, for their presence enlivened the dullness of those secluded abodes, and they were received with honor at the abbeys, which often owed the best part of their revenues to the patronage of the knights; but if no castle or abbey or hermitage were at hand their hardy habits made it not intolerable to them to lie down, supperless, at the foot of some wayside cross, and pass the night.

The training of a knight

The preparatory education of candidates for knighthood was long and arduous. At seven years of age the noble children were usually removed from their father’s house to the court or castle of their future patron, and placed under the care of a governor, who taught them the first articles of religion, and respect and reverence for their lords and superiors, and initiated them in the ceremonies of a court. They were called pages, valets, or varlets, and their office was to carve, to wait at table, and to perform other menial services, which were not then considered humiliating. In their leisure hours they learned to dance and play on the harp, were instructed in the mysteries of woods and rivers, that is, in hunting, falconry, and fishing, and in wrestling, tilting with spears, and performing other military exercises on horseback. At fourteen the page became an esquire, and began a course of severer and more laborious exercises. To vault on a horse in heavy armor; to run, to scale walls, and spring over ditches, under the same encumbrance; to wrestle, to wield the battle-axe for a length of time, without raising the visor or taking breath; to perform with grace all the evolutions of horsemanship,

— were necessary preliminaries to the reception of knighthood, which was usually conferred at twenty-one years of age, when the young man's education was supposed to be completed. In the meantime, the esquires were no less assiduously engaged in acquiring all those refinements of civility which formed what was in that age called courtesy. The same castle in which they received their education was usually thronged with young persons of the other sex, and the page was encouraged, at a very early age, to select some lady of the court as the mistress of his heart, to whom he was taught to refer all his sentiments, words, and actions. The service of his mistress was the glory and occupation of a knight, and her smiles, bestowed at once by affection and gratitude, were held out as the recompense of his well-directed valor. Religion united its influence with those of loyalty and love, and the order of knighthood, endowed with all the sanctity and religious awe that attended the priesthood, became an object of ambition to the greatest sovereigns.

The ceremonies of initiation were peculiarly solemn. After undergoing a severe fast, and spending whole nights in prayer, the candidate confessed, and received the sacrament. He then clothed himself in snow-white garments, and repaired to the church, or the hall, where the ceremony was to take place, bearing a knightly sword suspended from his neck, which the officiating priest took and blessed, and then returned to him. The candidate then, with folded arms, knelt before the presiding knight, who, after some questions about his motives and purposes in requesting admission, administered to him the oaths, and granted his request. Some of the knights present, sometimes even ladies and damsels, handed to him in succession the spurs, the coat of mail, the hauberk, the armlet and gauntlet, and lastly he girded on the sword. He then knelt again before the president, who, rising from his seat, gave him the "accolade," which consisted of three strokes, with the flat of a sword, on the shoulder or neck of the candidate, accompanied by the words: "In the name of God, of St. Michael, and St. George, I make thee a knight; be valiant, courteous, and loyal!" Then he received his helmet, his shield, and spear; and thus the investiture ended.

Source: *Bulfinch's Mythology* by Thomas Bulfinch, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/4928/pg4928.html>, access: 31 January, 2013.

knight-errant – błędny rycerz
 wayside cross – przydrożny krzyż
 encumbrance – obciążenie

10. Look at the words underlined in the fragment of the text *Bulfinch's Mythology* above and match them with definitions.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. destitute _____ | a. demanding great effort |
| 2. mutual _____ | b. the medieval system, principles, and customs of knight
hood |
| 3. invincible _____ | c. a solemn, formal declaration or promise |
| 4. chivalry _____ | d. a medieval competition |
| 5. tournament _____ | e. hard-working |

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 6. arduous _____ | f. completely lacking |
| 7. assiduous _____ | g. possessed in common |
| 8. courtesy _____ | h. good manners; polite behaviour |
| 9. fast _____ | i. abstaining from food |
| 10. oath _____ | j. unconquerable |

11. Fill in the missing prepositions. If you need help, consult *Bulfinch's Mythology*.

1. likely _____ happen
2. _____ the mercy _____
3. loyalty _____ sb
4. compassion _____ sb
5. to be derived _____
6. rely _____
7. in time _____ war
8. remove _____
9. _____ the care of
10. to be engaged _____
11. consist _____

12. Complete the gaps in the text below with words printed in *italics*.

also code ideals include knight literature (x2) permanent should virtues

Medieval and Renaissance literature

Knights and the 1) _____ of knighthood featured largely in medieval and Renaissance literature, and have secured a 2) _____ place in literary romance. While chivalric romances abound, particularly notable literary portrayals of knighthood 3) _____ *The Song of Roland*, Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale*, Baldassare Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, and Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, as well as Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* and other Arthurian tales (Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, *The Pearl*, Poet's *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, etc.).

The ideal courtier — the chivalrous 4) _____ — of Baldassarre Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* became a model of the ideal 5) _____ of nobility. Castiglione's tale took the form of a discussion among the nobility of the court of the Duke of Urbino, in which the characters determine that the ideal knight 6) _____ be renowned not only for his bravery and prowess in battle, but 7) _____ as a skilled dancer, athlete, singer and orator, and he should also be well-read in the Humanities and classical Greek and Latin 8) _____.

Later Renaissance literature, such as Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, rejected the 9) _____ of chivalry as unrealistic idealism. The rise of secular humanism in Renaissance literature demonstrated a marked departure from the chivalric romance of late medieval literature, and the chivalric ideal ceased to influence literature over successive centuries until it saw some pockets of revival in post-Victorian 10) _____.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knight>, access: 15 January, 2013.

13. Read one of the legends about King Arthur taken from *Stories from Le Morte D'Arthur and the Mabinogion*. Write the missing paragraphs (2, 4, 7) of the legend using the words in italics.

The Round Table

Thus Arthur was made King, but he had to fight for his own; for eleven great kings drew together and refused to acknowledge him as their lord, and chief amongst the rebels was King Lot of Orkney who had married Arthur's sister, Bellicent.

Par. 2:

*Merlin's advice two great Kings the river Trent
enemies friendship Arthur the Kings
Ban and Bors Knights of the Round Table*

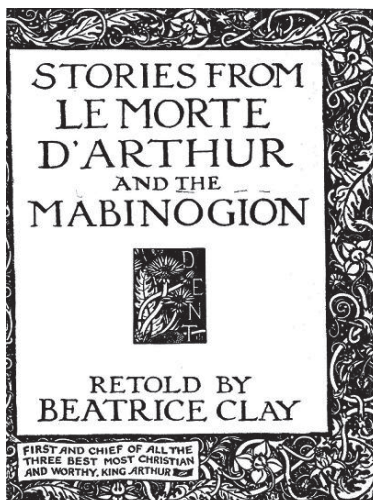
Then King Arthur set himself to restore order throughout his kingdom. To all who would submit and amend their evil ways, he showed kindness; but those who persisted in oppression and wrong he removed, putting in their places others who would deal justly with the people. And because the land had become overrun with forest during the days of misrule, he cut roads through the thickets, that no longer wild beasts and men, fiercer than the beasts, should lurk in their gloom, to the harm of the weak and defenceless. Thus it came to pass that soon the peasant ploughed his fields in safety, and where had been wastes, men dwelt again in peace and prosperity.

Par. 4:

<i>rebuild their towns</i>	<i>restore order</i>	<i>King Leodegrance of Cameliard</i>
<i>Guenevere</i>	<i>all his love</i>	<i>sought counsel of Merlin</i>

So the King sent his knights to Leodegrance, to ask of him his daughter; and Leodegrance consented, rejoicing to wed her to so good and knightly a King. With great pomp, the princess was conducted to Canterbury, and there the King met her, and they two were wed by the Archbishop in the great Cathedral, amid the rejoicings of the people.

On that same day did Arthur found his Order of the Round Table, the fame of which was to spread throughout Christendom and endure through all time. Now the Round Table had been made for King Uther Pendragon by Merlin, who had meant thereby to



Cover of *Stories from Le Morte D'Arthur and the Mabinogion*

Source: http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15551/15551-h/15551-h.htm#CHAPTER_I, access: 23 January, 2013.

set forth plainly to all men the roundness of the earth. After Uther died, King Leodegrance had possessed it; but when Arthur was wed, he sent it to him as a gift, and great was the King's joy at receiving it. One hundred and fifty knights might take their places about it, and for them Merlin made sieges or seats. One hundred and twenty-eight did Arthur knight at that great feast; thereafter, if any sieges were empty, at the high festival of Pentecost new knights were ordained to fill them, and by magic was the name of each knight found inscribed, in letters of gold, in his proper siege. One seat only long remained unoccupied, and that was the Siege Perilous. No knight might occupy it until the coming of Sir Galahad; for, without danger to his life, none might sit there who was not free from all stain of sin.

Par. 7:

*pomp and ceremony vows of true knighthood show mercy defend the weak fight in
a wrongful cause the knights rejoiced to Arthur and to his Queen realm justice to all*

Source: *Stories from Le Morte D'Arthur and the Mabinogion* by Beatrice Clay, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15551/15551-h/15551-h.htm#CHAPTER_I, access: 23 January, 2013.

Watch the program *King Arthur, part 3* and do exercises 14-16.

King Arthur part 3 (9:46 min.)

Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s6G7KD7h5PE>, access: 23 January, 2013.

14. Decide if the sentences below are true (T) or false (F).

1. In reality you can get swords from stone, because you form them by pouring molten metal into an opening in a stone. _____
2. The legendary Lady of the Lake replaced Arthur's broken sword with Excalibur. _____
3. The Celtic people had this tradition that after the funeral rite a king's possession, quite often a sword, was thrown into a sacred lake, river or stretch of water as an offering to a water goddess. _____
4. The sword in the stone and the Lady of the Lake were re-imaginings of rare Dark Age rituals. _____
5. The superpowers of Merlin and Morgana seem impossible and there is no logical explanation for them. _____

15. Complete the gaps with one word only.

1. The _____ aspects of the King Arthur's story were _____ lifted directly from _____ folklore.
2. The _____ implies that he (King Arthur) _____ around 500 AD.
3. He was a _____ leader who fought a _____ battle of Mynydd Baddon and stopped a _____ invasion.
4. There is one man whose story seems to _____ around the _____ of the Saxons.

16. Answer the questions.

1. What do we learn from the book written in 6th century?
2. Who was Artorius Castus and what do we know about him?
3. Who are the Sarmatians? What have you learnt about them from the programme?
4. Who was Arthur according to Geoffrey Ashe? What evidence makes him think so?
5. What kind of doubt does the narrator raise?

KEY

1.

Do not confirm any of the answers at this stage. Students, after reading the texts, will find out the answer

1. He was the author of *Historia Regum Britanniae* in which king Arthur was developed as a figure
2. 9th century; in a Latin text
3. He defeated the Saxons who invaded the country
4. Arthur and Mordred were killed
5. The 12th-century French writer Chrétien de Troyes
6. It is a 9th-century Latin historical compilation attributed in some late manuscripts to a Welsh cleric called Nennius; its reliability is questioned
7. It's a matter of debate
8. One of the theories said that his name derives from Arcturus, the brightest star in the constellation Boötes, near Ursa Major

3.

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. c | 5. a |
| 2. g | 6. d |
| 3. e | 7. b |
| 4. f | |

4.

1. Welsh and Breton sources
2. the warrior fighting people and monsters to protect Britain
3. the most famous Welsh poetic references to Arthur; known as Y Gododdin (The Gododdin), attributed to the 6th-century poet Aneirin; it is known only from a 13th-century manuscript
4. It tells of Arthur helping his kinsman Culhwch win the hand of Olwen, daughter of Ysbaddaden Chief-Giant, by completing a series of apparently impossible tasks
5. The saint gives protection to a man who killed three of Arthur's soldiers, and Arthur demands a herd of cattle as wergeld for his men. Cadoc delivers them as demanded, but when Arthur takes possession of the animals, they turn into bundles of ferns.

5.

1. a fierce warrior and a mighty leader
2. It was the beginning of Dark Ages, on the island of the Britons strife and chaos were growing, and civilization was on the verge of collapse
3. peace and prosperity
4. barbarians
5. their wealth was falling apart; Arthur, king of the Britons

6.

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. superman | 9. sorcerer |
| 2. through | 10. wizard |
| 3. growing | 11. helped |
| 4. bravery | 12. rule |
| 5. dashing | 13. legendary |
| 6. adored | 14. side |
| 7. feared | 15. loving |
| 8. an | |

7.

1. Around him were the best knights of the land, sir Gawain, the brain, sir Galahad, the pure and sir Lancelot, the handyman. (*sir Gawain, the brave; sir Lancelot, the handsome*)
2. The Round Table only welded the knights together. (*it also represented the code of chivalry*)
3. The search for the Holy Grail is referred to as the quest for glory. (*gold and glory*)
4. The tale of king Arthur is one of many great legends of the time. (*is one of the greatest of all time*)
5. Fifty hundreds years later historians are trying to determine if the legendary king really existed. (*fifteen*)

8.

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. c |
| 2. h | 7. f |
| 3. e | 8. g |
| 4. a | 9. d |
| 5. j | 10. i |

9.

1. F; most frequently they lived in hostility
2. T
3. F; he sometimes searched for adventure
4. T
5. F; they were not regarded as humiliating at the time
6. T
7. T
8. F; he was encouraged to choose one at the early stage not when the training was complete
9. T

10.

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. f | 6. a |
| 2. g | 7. e |
| 3. j | 8. h |
| 4. b | 9. i |
| 5. d | 10. c |

11.

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| 1. to | 7. of |
| 2. at | 8. from |
| 3. to | 9. under |
| 4. to | 10. in |
| 5. from | 11. of |
| 6. on | |

12.

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. ideals | 6. should |
| 2. permanent | 7. also |
| 3. include | 8. literature |
| 4. knight | 9. code |
| 5. virtues | 10. literature |

13.

Par. 2

By Merlin's advice, Arthur sent for help overseas, to Ban and Bors, the two great Kings who ruled in Gaul. With their aid, he overthrew his foes in a great battle near the river Trent; and then he passed with them into their own lands and helped them drive out their enemies. So there was ever great friendship between Arthur and the Kings Ban and Bors, and all their kindred; and afterwards some of the most famous Knights of the Round Table were of that kin.

Par. 4

Amongst the lesser kings whom Arthur helped to rebuild their towns and restore order, was King Leodegrance of Cameliard. Now Leodegrance had one fair child, his daughter Guenevere; and from the time that first he saw her, Arthur gave her all his love. So he sought counsel of Merlin, his chief adviser. Merlin heard the King sorrowfully, and he said: "Sir King, when a man's heart is set, he may not change. Yet had it been well if ye had loved another."

Par. 7

With pomp and ceremony did each knight take upon him the vows of true knighthood: to obey the King; to show mercy to all who asked it; to defend the weak; and for no worldly gain to fight in a wrongful cause: and all the knights rejoiced together, doing honour to

Arthur and to his Queen. Then they rode forth to right the wrong and help the oppressed, and by their aid, the King held his realm in peace, doing justice to all.

14.

1. T
2. T
3. F (during the funeral rite)
4. F (relatively common Dark Age rituals)
5. F (there is an explanation rooted in mythology; Merlin is a warrior who went mad and in his madness acquires the powers of prophecy; Morgana is derived from an ancient Celtic goddess of witchcraft)

15.

1. magical; probably; popular
2. evidence; lived
3. military; historical; devastating
4. revolve; defeat

16

1. the story of a great leader Ambrosius Aurelianus who defeated the Saxons, at least one ancient text credits him with the victory of Mynydd Baddon
2. Artorius Castus was a Roman officer stationed in Britain in 2nd c., which makes him 400 years too young to have been fighting the Saxons but over the centuries some Arthur-like legends have come to be connected with Artorius.
3. The Sarmatians were a unit of cavalry soldiers; they had long swords; they fought from the horse back; they flew a pen-dragon banner at the head of their unit; they were also known to have worshipped a sword stuck in the ground during some rituals; one of their legends tells about a fearsome warrior who wielded an unstoppable sword with connection to a water ritual, which resembles Excalibur; all the details are similar to what we learn about Arthur from the legends, but one inconveniency is there is a 400-year gap
4. According to Geoffrey Ashe Arthur is very similar to Riothamus; Riothamus lived in the right time; he had the expedition to modern-day France to fight against the Goths, King Arthur also traveled to France; Riothamus expedition ended in defeat owing to betrayal, similar thing happened to Arthur; shortly after he was betrayed, Riothamus departed for Avalon in Burgundy, which is another intersection between Arthur and Riothamus; Riothamus's story bears a striking resemblance to the Arthur legend.
5. King Arthur should be a home-grown hero, fighting in England not in France.